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THEODORE W. NOYES, Editor

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Chairman McCormick.

The fact that Vance McCormick is an unknown and untried man in national affairs has both advantages and disadvantages. Some complaint is promptly heard. "Who is he?" comes from many party sources, and particularly from old party workers. They would have preferred the selection of one of their number. A "kid" is seldom to the liking of a veteran. But the selection was with the President, and now that he has made it all will acquiesce. Harmony is the watchword.

An advantage is that, being unknown and untried, Mr. McCormick may be expected to come the more readily under the influence of the candidate. Owing his place to Mr. Wilson, he will be bidable at all stages of the campaign. He will have no notions of his own to oppose to the candidate's. And this is important, as Mr. Wilson is certain to be in many things and in the largest sense his own campaign manager. A veteran—some man who had been a power in politics while Mr. Wilson was teaching school—might have caused friction by attempting to assert himself.

It is interesting to note that Mr. Wilson has copied Mr. Cleveland in this business. In his third campaign—the one that tested him the most severely—Mr. Cleveland went to Pennsylvania for his manager. Mr. Harrity was then no more of a national quantity than Mr. McCormick now is. And on that account, and because Pennsylvania was a republican stronghold, some prominent democrats protested. But the selection was justified by the event. Mr. Harrity, piloted somewhat by the candidate, in turn piloted the candidate to victory.

Before fixing upon Mr. Harrity, Mr. Cleveland considered others; but objections of one kind or another seemed to bar men ordinarily associated with such work. Was this true also in this latter case? A number of men, all experienced campaigners, were mentioned for the place, but the outsider, so to say, won. Mr. McCormick is rich, and presumably in touch with capital at home and elsewhere—a point of importance. A campaign manager must "raise the wind." Campaigning in the national field requires a large sum of money. Legitimate expenses are heavy. Party workers are "practical men," and demand pay for their time and skill. And they must see the color of the party's coin before they can be induced to get into their stride. Mr. McCormick will be a busy man until election day.

Having observed the grace with which Woodrow Wilson participated in the recent procession on Pennsylvania avenue, the democrats are enthusiastically calling for an encore on the 4th of March.

Thanks to harmony, the St. Louis convention was able to give its attention to a close analysis of platform material instead of to general controversy.

At this juncture the photographer may rely on finding a confident smile on the face of each of the four gentlemen who figure on the national tickets.

The St. Louis Platform.

The platform is the President's. Planks not shaped by his own hand were shaped by those working under his orders and known wishes. In all its parts the deliverance is thoroughly Wilsonian. Whether in case of success in November promises for the future will be kept will figure in the campaign. The fate of the Baltimore platform will raise, and justify, the question.

Present prospects are that the tariff will be much discussed both on the stump and in the press, and this is the tariff plank adopted at St. Louis:

"We affirm our belief in the doctrine of a tariff for the purpose of providing sufficient revenue for the operation of the government economically administered, and unreservedly indorse the Underwood tariff law as truly exemplifying that doctrine. We recognize that tariff rates are necessarily subject to change to meet changing conditions in the world's production and trade. The events of the last two years have brought about many momentous changes. In some respects their effects are yet conjectural and wait to be disclosed, particularly in regard to our foreign trade."

In order to ascertain just what those changes may be the democratic Congress is providing for a non-partisan tariff commission to make impartial and thorough study of every economic fact that may throw light either upon our past or upon our future fiscal policy with regard to the imposition of taxes on imports or with regard to the changed and changing conditions under which our trade is carried on. We cordially indorse this timely proposal and declare ourselves in sympathy with the principle and purpose of shaping legislation within that field in accordance with clearly established facts rather than in accordance with trade demands of selfish interests or upon information provided largely, if not exclusively, by them."

Note the absence of the two famous old democratic shibboleths, "a tariff for revenue only," and "Protection is robbery under the forms of law."

promise is held out that whatever changes may be found necessary in schedules and rates as results of the war, they will be made, if the task is committed to the democrats, according to the principles exemplified in that law.

Here, then, is the marrow of the democratic proposition: The war has not affected the principle upon which the Underwood law rests, and hence the new law if drafted by the democrats will simply be the Underwood law brought up to the date of revision.

What say the business interests of the country as to that? How did they like the Underwood law during its operation before the war broke out? How did it meet the promise made at Baltimore about lowering the high cost of living, stimulating American production, and supplying sufficient revenue for the support of the government? It is not difficult to answer those questions by the record.

As to the so-called non-partisan tariff commission the work will be performed by a majority membership committed to a tariff for revenue only, and a minority membership committed to a tariff for both revenue and protection. We shall have then two reports by the commission. If the democrats control the next Congress the majority report will be considered; if the republicans, the minority report. Ergo, the tariff cannot be taken out of politics, or politics out of the tariff. Under our form of government, politics, in the sense of party opinion, enters into nearly all important legislation.

The Mexican Threat.

Gen. Trevino's note to Gen. Pershing warning him that any movement of American troops in Mexico south, west or east will be considered an overt act by the Mexican government and will be a signal to open hostilities falls just short of an ultimatum. On its face it is the dictum of Carranza, and is, therefore, not to be rated as a mere bluff of a subordinate. It is to be noted that it does not embrace a peremptory demand for the withdrawal of the American troops, but states that "the Mexican people are tired of the tactics employed by the Americans, and are of the opinion the troops should be withdrawn."

It is important that the United States should act as promptly as possible in the matter of Carranza's demand for the withdrawal of the American troops. A note, it is understood, has been prepared and is soon to be sent. Trevino's warning to Gen. Pershing would seem to be an adequate reason for immediate announcement of the American purpose.

Gen. Pershing's column in Mexico is undoubtedly in danger of a disastrous attack, occupying an extended position without adequate flanking protection and supplied by a thin line of communications, chiefly operated by motor. A more precarious situation could hardly be conceived. The Trevino note is to be read as more than a definite warning. It is virtually a threat, and in view of the temperament of the people with whom this country is dealing this threat is to be taken in all gravity. Plainly any action by the Pershing forces that could by any possibility be construed into a "movement" in one of the prohibited directions would be seized upon as an excuse for an attack, though the intention behind that movement might be entirely innocent.

If the American forces have any right to be in Mexico at all they have the right of a certain range of action for their own protection and for the accomplishment of the purpose for which they crossed the border. Gen. Trevino's note, which is doubtless the action of the Carranza government, must be met decisively on this basis.

Democratic managers will have to be alert and industrious if they expect to dig up any criticisms of the present administration which have not already been freely offered and frankly discussed.

In making their prognostications campaign forecasters are compelled to rely largely on the assumption that the average voter is largely a creature of habit who does not change his mind even once in four years.

As an expert in recognizing the psychological moment Frank Hitchcock is now conceded to have no superior.

About the only institution in Europe now credited with stability is the siege of Verdun.

It is a long way between the keynote and the finale.

The Civil Retirement Plan.

The declaration by the democratic party in its platform adopted at St. Louis in favor of civil service retirement should be followed by immediate action by Congress. That party is now in control of both branches of the national legislature. It has the power to put its principle into execution without delay. Before the voting occurs in November there should be enacted, in the terms of the platform, "an equitable retirement law providing for the retirement of superannuated and disabled employees of the civil service, to the end that a higher standard of efficiency may be maintained."

This subject has been before Congress for years. It has been considered by committees time and again, has been investigated by experts, urged by chiefs of divisions, of bureaus, of departments. The need of it has been demonstrated repeatedly, in specific instances of hardship and uneconomical office administration. No one can doubt the propriety of making some decent provision for the superannuated men and women who have served the government long and faithfully, and have reached the point of comparative incapacity. No one can question the business wisdom

of making room in the ranks of the clerks for promotions, to stimulate interest and to reward fidelity and efficiency. Every big business concern in the country recognizes this principle and many of them have adopted the systematic retirement plan as a means of advancing effectiveness.

The United States government is a big business, perhaps the greatest in the world. It employs several hundred thousand people. Its welfare depends in large measure upon the fidelity and the efficiency of these employees. For many years it has neglected this item of administrative management, and now conditions are such as to force attention to the subject. The dominant political party in national convention has declared for a civil retirement law. It can enact that law without delay, and presumably in the light of the St. Louis statement of principle no democrat would be inclined to venture opposition.

Seldom has a chance been offered to a political party to make good so promptly on a platform as in this instance is afforded to the democrats. The voters in November should be shown not merely a declaration of belief, but a finished performance, in terms of a retirement law.

When Orator Ollie James referred to the democracy whose history challenged the admiration of the world, he very properly declined to give serious weight to comments made from time to time by Mexican agitators.

The republican party has managed to get its affairs into shape sufficiently to prevent the New York political feud from flourishing as the consideration of first importance.

It looks as if the principals in the present campaign would leave all mud-slinging, if there is to be any, to unauthorized exponents of that particular art.

Prosperity has become so general that the full gasoline tank is an object of more solicitude than the full dinner pail.

There is no hesitation about reminding Col. Roosevelt that he still has a reputation as a vote-getter to sustain.

Though friends and mutual admirers, Mr. Hughes and Mr. Fairbanks refuse to cultivate the same style of beard.

SHOOTING STARS.

BY PHILANDER JOHNSON.

An Obligation.

"Are you going to make any speeches during the campaign?"

"I'll have to make some," replied Senator Sorghum. "The eloquent silence has become the exclusive privilege of supreme leadership."

The Immediate Problem.

"Where are the snows of yesterday?" inquired the man who quotes poetry.

"Never mind about that," rejoined his wife. "The important question is, 'Where is the ice that was due to arrive this morning?'"

Apprehensions.

The summer girl's garments are fluffily thin.

And her shotguns come close to her knees.

If July keeps as chilly as June started in,

There are fears that the lady will freeze.

The Saving Syllable.

"You must take care not to let your position seem pathetic."

"Never fear," replied the man whose hat had been kicked out of the ring. "I'll make it sufficiently pathetic to prevent it from seeming merely pathetic."

Blessings.

"There may be blessings in disguise," said Hezekiah Bings.

"But you must be uncommon wise To profit by such things."

"The tear that glisters now may be a crystal lens that shows Life's hidden truths to you and me Which smiles could not disclose."

"But blessings in disguise expand With shadows of dimmy That make it hard to understand The lessons they convey."

"And so, when Fate her favor flings Where mortals congregate, It like," said Hezekiah Bings, "To take my blessings straight."

Prophets.

From the Baltimore Star.

If there is one person who can make more mistakes than the weather prophet it is the political prophet.

The Price of Boll Weevils.

From the Memphis News-Scimitar.

In one of the counties in Alabama a cent apiece is being offered for boll weevils, and they are cheap at the price. A boll weevil, if let alone, will not take long to destroy several dollars' worth of cotton, and if he can be disposed of for a cent the investment is a good one.

A Long, Long Way.

From the Chattanooga Times.

Although the Germans still are reported as holding one or two of the smaller forts in the neighborhood, the real distance to Verdun continues to be discouraging to the crown prince and his army.

International Courtesy.

From the Atlanta Constitution.

When Europe talks peace it is invariably with the polite implication of "You first."

Short in Their Accounts.

From the Syracuse Post-Standard.

The Berlin naval bookkeepers appear to have been a couple of battleships short in their accounts.

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